

Amendments To The Claims

This Listing Of Claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in this application:

Listing Of Claims:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): A multi-layer coating film-forming method which comprises coating a cationic electrodeposition coating composition (A) containing a blocked polyisocyanate compound as a crosslinking agent and bismuth hydroxide to form a non-cured electrodeposition coating film, coating a water based intercoat coating composition (B₁) containing a hydroxyl group and carboxyl group-containing base resin, a blocked polyisocyanate crosslinking agent, a fine aluminum powder and a titanium oxide white pigment onto the non-cured electrodeposition coating film to form a non-cured intercoat coating film, followed by heat curing both coating films simultaneously, the fine aluminum powder being contained in the range of 0.1 to 30 parts by weight, and the titanium oxide white pigment being contained in the range of 1 to 200 parts by weight per 100 parts by weight of a total amount of the hydroxyl group and carboxyl group-containing base resin and the crosslinking agent respectively.

Claim 2 (Currently Amended): A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein a crosslink-curing reaction of the non-cured electrodeposition coating film is controlled ~~so as~~ to take place earlier than a crosslink-curing reaction of the non-cured intercoat coating film.

Claim 3 (Original): A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the fine aluminum powder has a mean partial size in the range of 20 μm or less, and optionally is coated with a phosphate group-containing compound.

Cancel Claim 4.

Claim 5 (Withdrawn): A mult-layer multi-layer coating film forming method which comprises coating a cationic electrodeposition coating composition (A) containing a blocked polyisocyanate compound as a crosslinking agent to form a non-cured electrodeposition coating film, coating a water based intercoat coating composition (B₂) containing a hydroxyl group and carboxyl group-containing base resin, a blocked polyisocyanate crosslinking agent and an alicyclic epoxy compound to form a non-cured intercoat coating film, followed by heat curing the both coating films simulatneously.

Claim 6 (Withdrawn): A method as claimed in claim 5, wherein a crosslink-curing reaction of the non-cured electrodeposition coating film is controlled so as to take place earlier than a crosslink-curing reaction of the non-cured intercoat coating film.

Claim 7 (Withdrawn): The method as claimed in claim 5, wherein the cationic electrodeposition coating composition (A) is a lead-free cationic electrodeposition coating composition further containing a bismuth-containing compound.

Claim 8 (Withdrawn): A method as claimed in claim 7, wherein the bismuth-containing compound is selected from the group consisting of bismuth

hydroxide, bismuth trioxide, bismuth nitrate, bismuth benzoate, bismuth citrate, bismuth oxycarbonate and bismuth silicate.

Claim 9 (Original): A method as claimed in claim 7, wherein the bismuth-containing compound is in the form of a water-dispersed paste prepared by mixing and dispersing in the presence of a dispersing agent into an aqueous medium a water-insoluble bismuth compound and an aliphatic carboxylic acid represented by the formula: $R_1C(H)(OR_2)(CH_2)_nCOOH$, wherein R_1 is a hydrogen atom or an alkyl group having 1 to 3 carbon atoms, R_2 is hydrogen atom or an alkyl group having 1 to 10 carbon atoms and n is 0 or 1, and containing therein an aliphatic carboxylic acid-modified bismuth compound in a water-insoluble state.

Claims 10 and 11 (Canceled)

Claim 12 (Currently Amended): The method as claimed in Claim 1, wherein the bismuth hydroxide ~~bismuth-containing compounds~~ is in the form of a water-dispersed paste prepared by mixing and dispersing in the presence of a dispersing agent into an aqueous medium a water-insoluble bismuth compound and an aliphatic carboxylic acid represented by the formula: $R_1C(H)(OR_2)(CH_2)_nCOOH$, wherein R_1 is hydrogen atom or an alkyl group having 1 to 3 carbon atoms, R_2 is hydrogen atom or an alkyl group having 1 to 10 carbon atoms and n is 0 or 1, and containing therein an aliphatic carboxylic acid-modified bismuth compound in a water-insoluble state.